Julie Waitkus

Victor Olmedo

Francisca White

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

1A: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy

Rationale and Explanation

It is important for teachers to have an understanding of the content they teach, and be able to use a variety of pedagogical techniques to convey information to students. It is goes beyond helping students to learn the facts within a subject. A teacher should be able to know the content well enough to develop lessons that encompass the concepts, principles, and relationships that make up that subject. While having knowledge of content is essential, it is also important to have the ability to use pedagogical skills. What will be the method used to deliver the lesson? Knowing the complexities of a topic, how will the teacher present the lesson in a way that will help students to understand? Knowing the content allows the teacher to know the common errors associated with the topic, plan for them, and use a variety of teaching techniques to get students to understand.

A proficient teacher's demonstration of the understanding of this domain is evidenced by that teacher's ability to show a solid understanding of the important concepts in the discipline and the way they relate to one another. The teacher's plans and practice show an understanding of the prerequisite relationships between topics and concepts. Lastly, the teacher's plans and practice show knowledge of effective pedagogical approaches in the discipline. A distinguished teacher would demonstrate understanding of this domain by having an extensive knowledge of the important concepts in a subject, and how they relate to one another and the discipline. The teacher would show an understanding of the prerequisite relationship among topics and concepts and link the necessary cognitive structures to ensure student understanding. Also, the plans and practices show a variety of effective pedagogical approaches in the subject, anticipating possible student errors.

1B: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students

In addition to having knowledge of content and pedagogy, teachers must know their students. They should know students' developmental stage of learning so that they can appropriately. The teacher must also know students' prior knowledge of a given topic, and structure the learning environment accordingly. A knowledgeable teacher will know the students' interests and talents, and the out-of-school knowledge that students bring to their learning. This knowledge can be used to help students to make connections in their learning of new content. Lastly, knowledge of students includes understanding the special needs of students, whether the needs are medical, emotional, or learning.

A teacher's demonstration of this domain is seen in the chart below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Element | Proficient Teacher | Distinguished Teacher |
| Knowledge of child and adolescent development | Teacher displays an accurate understanding of typical developmental characteristics of the age group as well as exceptions to the general pattern. | Teacher displays an accurate knowledge of typical developmental characteristics of the age group, exceptions to the general pattern, and the extent to which each student follows the pattern. |
| Knowledge of the learning process | Teacher has accurate knowledge of how students learn, and applies it to the class as a whole and to groups of students. | Teacher has extensive knowledge of how students learn, and applies it to individual students. |
| Knowledge of students' skills, knowledge, and language proficiency | Teacher recognizes the value of understanding the students' skills, knowledge, and language proficiency and displays this knowledge for students. | Teacher displays an understanding of each students' skills, knowledge, and language proficiency and has a strategy for maintaining the information |
| Knowledge of students' interests and cultural heritage | Teacher recognizes the value of understanding the students' interests and cultural habits and displays this knowledge for groups of students. | Teacher recognizes the value of understanding the students' interests and cultural habits and displays this knowledge for individual students. |
| Knowledge of students' special needs | The teacher has information on each student's learning and medical needs that was obtained from a variety of sources. | Teacher displays awareness of students' special learning and medical needs. |

DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION

**Component 1c: Setting Instructional Outcomes**

Rationale and Explanation

Teachers must relate clear instructional outcomes to students. They need to know what they are intended to learn. It is beneficial to the teacher and the students that the students are engaged in determining these outcomes. There are many factors that go into determining the instructional outcomes: a district’s curriculum, external mandates, and community expectations.

It is important that the teacher takes into account the students that are in the classroom. The instructional outcomes should reflect different types of learning, some may represent factual knowledge or conceptual understanding, reasoning skills, social skills, or communication skills. The outcomes must be appropriate to the diverse students in the room, providing for the students’ age and developmental levels, prior skills and knowledge, and interests and backgrounds.

Demonstrating Proficiency

Value, Sequence, and Alignment: High expectations and rigor and important learning in the discipline

Clarity: Outcomes are clear, written in form of student learning.

Balance: Outcomes reflect several different types of learning.

Suitability for Diverse Learners: Outcomes suitable for ALL students

**Component 1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources**

Rationale and Explanation

Teachers need to be aware of all the resources available and constantly add more to their “bag of tricks.” The most basic resources include texts and supplemental materials: physical objects, such as math manipulative or models or science lab equipment or print materials like maps and primary source materials. Resources can also be outside the classroom such as museums and concerts.

Another way to go is to have students do some investigating on their own. They can access supplemental reading material, items in the school or town library or historical society, or Web sites.

Teachers also have the responsibility to learn about new developments in pedagogy. Professional associations are a great resource as well as various Web sites.

Beginning teachers often use the resources given to them. With more experience, teachers can seek out more resources – courses, workshops, study groups, and networks.

Demonstrating Proficiency

Resources for classroom use: Awareness of resources available

Resources to extend content knowledge and pedagogy: Awareness of resources to enhance content and pedagogical knowledge

Resources for students: Awareness of student resources

**Component 1E: Designing coherent instruction**

No matter what you do in life you need a game plan. A well thought out lesson will allow you to better impart the information, access and reflect. A good lesson needs to have several elements to it and there should be some coherence to these. The instructional outcomes, activities, materials and grouping of students should all be link and flow together. There should also be a logical sequence of events in your lesson from the content to the activities to the assessments. These should be from easier to harder, from simple to complex.

Good planning is essential for student success. But a perfectly constructed lesson is not enough. The execution of the lesson is just as important. Nothing ever goes as planned so there should be some flexibility in the execution of these lessons.

Danielson suggests that of all the elements in the design of a lesson the most critical is the design of the activities. These activities should allow students to be cognitively active and they should offer several options that allow the opportunity to develop their own understanding of the material.

“Activities and assignments that promote learning tend to share certain characteristics”

* Emphasize thinking and problem solving
* They permit students choice and initiative
* Encourage depth rather than breadth

Elements: To achieve Proficiency a teacher must:

* Create **learning activities** that are suitable to all students, are cognitively challenging and there is an opportunity for students to choose their method of learning.
* Present **instructional materials and resources** that are suitable to students, support instruction and have to be designed to engage students in meaningful learning.
* Organize **instructional groups** to allow students the opportunity learn using their strengths.

**Component 1F: Designing students assessments**

Assessing students is one of the most if not the most important element when developing a well constructed curriculum or lesson. It serves two purposes: 1) Determine how much information did the students understand and can they see the practicality of this information 2) As an informational tool for educator. The assessments should show what they did not understand and in turn this allows us to adjust our future lessons, assessments and curriculums. Assessments should reflect authentic, real-world applications of knowledge and understanding. These assessments should allow students to apply the information learned into real world situation. They should be saying “I see how this information can be used in the real world to solve…” In these assessments we should be more interested, not on whether or not they get the answers right, but rather on the process by which they chose their answers. It is important to understand how they came up to the answer for it ensures understanding.

Elements:

* Congruence with instructional goals: assessments meat the students needs and goals and all the instructional outcomes are assessed.
* Criteria and standards have been made clear to the students.
* Design for formative assessment was well developed and particular different approaches were used to accommodate the learning style of students.
* The teacher developed an assessment that provides information for future instruction.